

Resolution No.:	<u>19-432</u>
Introduced:	<u>April 21, 2020</u>
Adopted:	<u>April 28, 2020</u>

**COUNTY COUNCIL  
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

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Lead Sponsor: County Council

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**SUBJECT:** Special Appropriation to the Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget  
Montgomery County Government  
COVID-19 Human Services Response and Community Assistance  
Non-Departmental Account (NDA)  
\$2,000,000 (Source of Funds: General Fund Reserves)  
Emergency Eviction Prevention and Rental Assistance

**Background**

1. Section 308 of the County Charter provides that a special appropriation is an appropriation which states that it is necessary to meet an unforeseen disaster or other emergency, or to act without delay in the public interest. Each special appropriation shall be approved by not less than six Councilmembers. The Council may approve a special appropriation at any time after public notice by news release. Each special appropriation shall specify the source of funds to finance it.
2. Montgomery County has programs to help low and moderate-income county residents meet their monthly costs for rental housing, prevent eviction, and move people out of homelessness. These county-funded efforts are a part of the county's continuum that also includes programs supported by the state and federal government.
3. A new coronavirus disease, named COVID-19, appeared in December 2019 and spread quickly, with extremely serious impacts in the United States. As of April 20, 2020, there were over 740,000 confirmed cases and over 40,000 deaths in the United States. As of April 20, the State of Maryland reported 13,684 confirmed cases and 516 deaths statewide with 2,647 of the confirmed cases and 89 of the confirmed deaths in Montgomery County.
4. To slow the spread of the disease, Governor Hogan declared a State of Emergency and has issued several Executive Orders with actions that include, but are not limited to, closing all non-essential businesses which has left many county residents either unemployed or with significantly reduced work and income. Many residents are not able to pay all or a portion of their rent.

5. Additional funds are needed to help people who may lose their housing because they are in informal arrangements and do not have eviction protections mandated by the courts and the Governor, for households that were working their way out of homelessness through rapid rehousing but are not able to find employment, people who are able to move out of homelessness with aid for security deposits, households that are not eligible for other assistance, and households that now find themselves needing assistance. Assistance now will prevent evictions once the emergency is lifted.
6. Before the pandemic crisis, about half of Montgomery County renters were cost burdened. A recent Urban Institute brief on why supporting renters during the COVID-19 crisis is critical to a stable housing market noted that renters are less financially stable than homeowners; in 2018 one-fifth of renters didn't have \$400 for unexpected costs; and, the CARES Act includes funding targeted to households that were receiving federal aid prior to the pandemic but not specifically for low-income renter households who are eligible but don't receive federal aid.
7. Notice of a public hearing was given and a public hearing was held.

### **Action**

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

A special appropriation to the FY20 Operating Budget of the Montgomery County Government, in the amount of \$2,000,000 is approved as follows:

	<u>Personnel Expense</u>	<u>Operating Expense</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
COVID-19 Human Services Response and Community Assistance NDA	\$0	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000

These funds must be used by the Department of Health and Human Services to support programs administered by Services to End and Prevent Homelessness. This may include emergency eviction prevention, housing stabilization, and rapid re-housing strategies. The Executive must report to the Council by May 8, 2020 how the parameters for programs have been temporarily modified to respond to the COVID-19 crisis.

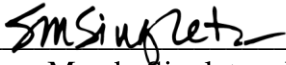
At least one million dollars of these funds must be used to provide a short-term rental subsidy program to low and moderate-income households in response to the emergency. The Executive must provide the parameters of this program, including eligibility, application process, and maximum benefit to the Council prior to issuing any application. It is the Council's intent that this support will be time limited. Acceptance of this assistance does not prevent any resident from being accepted into a permanent subsidy program for which they

are eligible; however, County departments and agencies should first leverage any federal or state assistance for which the person is eligible.

The County will seek federal and State reimbursement for program costs associated with response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This appropriation is needed to respond to a public health emergency and to act without delay in the public interest.

This is a correct copy of Council action.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "SM Singleton", written over a horizontal line.

Selena Mendy Singleton, Esq.  
Clerk of the Council